

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claim 14.

Claims 13 and 15-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sawasaki et al. (U.S. 6,836,308). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited reference is not prior art against the present Application. Sawasaki has a United States filing date of August 16, 2001. The present Application, on the other hand, claims original foreign priority to Japanese Application 2001-029814, filed on February 6, 2001, which is more than six months earlier than the Section 102(e) date of the Sawasaki reference.

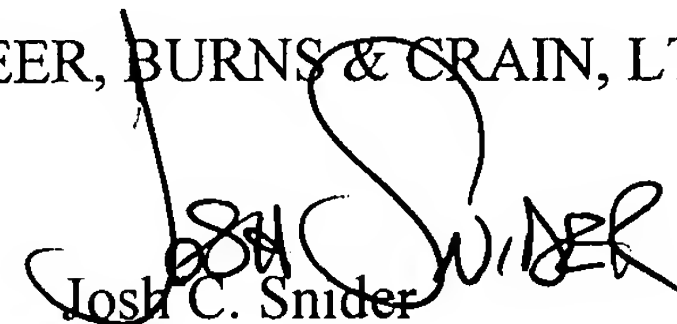
A certified translation of the priority Japanese Application is submitted herewith, in order to perfect priority. Accordingly, the rejection must be withdrawn.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 13-16, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if a further interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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